

ASHINGTON
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

ANNUAL REPORT

FOR 1905,

R. J. MILLS, M. B.,

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

PRINTED BY ORDER OF THE DISTRICT COUNCIL.

HIRST:
PORTLAND HOUSE PRINTING WORKS CO.,
1906.

ASHINGTON URBAN DISTRICT. DISTRIBUTION OF BIRTHS. 1905.

MONTH.	Ashington.	Hirst.	Total.
January ...	7	43	50
February ...	18	55	73
March ...	16	45	61
April ...	19	39	58
May ...	17	56	73
June ...	13	62	75
July ...	14	49	63
August ...	15	47	62
September ..	18	38	56
October ...	12	44	56
November...	7	37	44
December...	6	42	48
Total ...	162	557	719

DEATH RATE.

The mortality for this year is lighter than that for 1904.

Throughout the district there were 277 deaths, one non-resident making 276, 156 males and 120 females ; the rate per thousand population being 15·13.

You will find on comparing this rate with other years since the formation of the Council, that it is considerably lower and a marked decrease from last year.

Eliminating from this number 5 cases of fatal accident and suicide, and 23 due to prematurity of birth, we have a corrected return of 13·6.

A comparison of the yearly mortality returns since the formation of the Council is as follows :—

YEAR, 1896	TOTAL MORTALITY, 17·8		CORRECTED MORTALITY, 17·4	
„ 1897	„	17·8	„	16·6
„ 1898	„	16·3	„	15·4
„ 1899	„	18·5	„	16·8
„ 1900	„	17·45	„	15·17
„ 1901	„	23·28	„	21·28
„ 1902	„	17·02	„	15·3
„ 1903	„	16·25	„	14·25
„ 1904	„	18·29	„	17·35
„ 1905	„	15·13	„	13·6

The Mortality in each Ward is as follows :—76 in Ashington and 200 in Hirst, and the respective rate per thousand is, Ashington 11·01, and Hirst 17·5.

Of the 276 deaths at all ages, a considerable proportion occurs under one year, namely 126, of these 106 were in Hirst, and 20 in Ashington.

The remaining 150 were of the following years :—

From 1 to 5 years, 47 deaths:—11 in Ashington and 36 in Hirst.
 From 5 to 15 years, 12 deaths:— 3 in Ashington and 9 in Hirst.
 From 15 to 25 years, 10 deaths:— 4 in Ashington and 6 in Hirst.
 From 25 to 65 years, 57 deaths:—28 in Ashington and 29 in Hirst.
 From 65 upwards, 24 deaths:—10 in Ashington and 14 in Hirst.

The distribution of Age Mortality for each month is given in the following tables :—

DISTRIBUTION OF AGE MORTALITY. ASHINGTON. 1905.

MONTH.	All Ages.	Und. 1 yr.	1 to 5 yrs.	5 to 15 yrs.	15 to 25 yrs.	25 to 65 yrs.	65 yrs. and Ups.
January ...	5	3	0	0	0	2	0
February ...	8	0	4	0	1	2	1
March ...	10	4	1	0	1	3	1
April ...	7	2	1	0	0	3	1
May ...	6	1	0	0	0	3	2
June ...	5	2	0	0	1	2	0
July ...	6	1	0	1	0	4	0
August ...	7	2	1	1	0	2	1
September ..	8	4	2	0	0	1	1
October ...	4	0	1	0	1	2	0
November...	2	0	0	0	0	1	1
December...	8	1	1	1	0	3	2
Total ...	76	20	11	3	4	28	10

DISTRIBUTION OF AGE MORTALITY. HIRST. 1905.

MONTH.	All Ages.	Und. 1 yr,	1 to 5 yrs.	5 to 15 yrs.	15 to 25 yrs.	25 to 65 yrs.	65 yrs. and Ups.
January ...	30	12	10	3	1	4	0
February ...	20	11	2	0	0	4	3
March ...	18	8	5	1	0	0	4
April ...	9	5	1	0	1	2	0
May ...	12	7	1	0	0	2	2
June ...	19	9	3	3	1	2	1
July ...	7	2	3	0	0	1	1
August ...	22	14	2	1	0	3	2
September ..	17	11	1	0	1	4	0
October ...	20	12	1	0	2	5	0
November ...	10	3	4	0	0	2	1
December...	16	12	3	1	0	0	0
Total ...	200	106	36	9	6	29	14

AGE MORTALITY. 1905.

MONTH.	Males.	Fe- males.	All Ages.	Und. 1 yr.	1 to 5 yrs.	5 to 15 yrs.	15 to 25 yrs.	25 to 65 yrs.	65 yrs. and Ups.
January...	21	14	35	15	10	3	1	6	0
February..	16	12	28	11	6	0	1	6	4
March ...	14	14	28	12	6	1	1	3	5
April ...	7	9	16	7	2	0	1	5	1
May ...	9	9	18	8	1	0	0	5	4
June ...	15	9	24	11	3	3	2	4	1
July ...	6	7	13	3	3	1	0	5	1
August ...	15	14	29	16	3	2	0	5	3
September	14	11	25	15	3	0	1	5	1
October...	14	10	24	12	2	0	3	7	0
November	6	6	12	3	4	0	0	3	2
December	19	5	24	13	4	2	0	3	2
Total ...	156	120	276	126	47	12	10	57	24

Over the district the rate of Infant Mortality per thousand population is 6·8, as against 9·3 last year, and 7·7 in 1903.

In the Wards the proportion is:—Ashington 2·8 and Hirst 9·3.

Basing the Infant Mortality, not on the population, but per thousand children born, the rate over district is 175·24, last year it was 223 1. In Ashington it is 129·6 and in Hirst 190·3.

While the difference in death rate between the two Wards is striking, we must remember that even in proportion to the population, the birth rate is considerably higher in Hirst. A comparison giving for Hirst, a plus 114, and for Ashington, a minus 109, in births; while in deaths we have also a plus 29 for Hirst, and a minus 28 in Ashington, proportionate to the population in each Ward. Again the Infant Mortality compared per thousand children born in each Ward, show a plus in Hirst of 9, and a minus of 8 in Ashington. As we follow the figures in the years 25 to 65, we have the conditions reversed, and there is a plus death rate in Ashington, and a minus death rate in Hirst, to the extent of plus 7 in Ashington, and a minus 7 in Hirst.

CAUSES OF DEATH.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	Deaths in or belonging Whole District at sub-joined Ages							Deaths in Localities at all Ages.		
	All Ages.	Und. 1 yr.	1 and und. 5	5 and und. 15	15 and und. 25	25 and und. 65	65 and upds.	Ash- ington	Hirst.	Total Deaths in Public Instit'ns in District.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Smallpox	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Measles	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Scarlet Fever ..	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
Whooping Cough ..	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Diphtheria and M. Croup	6	1	2	2	1	0	0	0	6	0
Typhoid	8	0	0	3	3	2	0	3	5	5
Influenza	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Diarrhoea	5	2	3	0	0	0	0	1	4	0
Enteritis	23	20	3	0	0	0	0	2	21	0
Puerperal Fever ..	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Phthisis	19	0	1	2	5	11	0	10	9	0
Other Tuber Diseases ..	13	4	5	2	0	2	0	3	10	0
Cancer	7	0	0	0	0	7	0	4	3	0
Bronchitis	12	7	3	0	0	1	1	1	11	0
Pneumonia	9	2	3	1	0	3	0	5	4	0
Premature Birth ..	23	23	0	0	0	0	0	5	18	0
Heart Disease ..	17	2	0	0	1	8	6	5	12	0
Other Respiratory Diseases ..	5	1	3	0	0	1	0	0	5	0
Alcoholism	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
Accidents	4	0	0	0	0	3	1	4	0	0
Diseases and Accidents of Parturition ..	3	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	3	0
Suicides	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
Senility	10	0	0	0	0	0	10	6	4	0
Apoplexy	8	0	0	0	0	3	5	4	4	0
Convulsions	9	9	0	0	0	0	0	1	8	0
Meningitis	7	4	1	1	0	1	0	1	6	0
Broncho Pneumonia ..	29	14	15	0	0	0	0	4	25	0
Debility	26	26	0	0	0	0	0	5	21	0
Other Septic Diseases ..	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
All Other Causes ..	28	11	4	1	1	10	1	11	17	0
Total	276	126	46	12	11	57	24	76	200	5

On consulting table showing causes of death, we notice a marked increase in the death rate of Phthisis and Tuberculous disease generally. The number this year—19, is more than double that of 1904, when we had only 8, and in 1903—16. In other Tuberculous diseases we have this year 13, against 8 in 1904, giving a total of 32, as against a total of 16 last year. The death rate from Phthisis per thousand population is 1.03, while that from every form of this disease is 1.7.

In my monthly reports during the year, I have frequently called attention to the increase of Phthisis in our district, and given warning to the public as to its infectivity.

The habit of street spitting remains unabated, but the Council has given consent to the procuring of notices condemning the habit, which I hope to have affixed in the most public way possible in a very short time. The sputum of patients with this disease is highly dangerous, and in its dried form mixed with dust affords a ready means of its propagation and spread.

The total deaths from respiratory diseases of all kinds amounts to 74, no fewer than 28 of these being caused by Broncho Pneumonia.

The Zymotic Mortality this year is considerably less than in 1904. 16 as against 31 last year, and the rate per thousand including 23 cases of Zymotic Enteritis is 2·1, against 6 last year, and 3·1 in 1903.

There were 8 deaths from Enteric Fever out of 48 cases notified during the year.

Diphtheria is responsible for 6 deaths, 27 cases being notified. Three of these deaths occurred in January, only three occurring in the remaining 11 months.

On my appeal for efficient means of coping with this disease in the event of an outbreak, the Council favoured the suggestion of supplying Antitoxic Serum to the medical men in treatment of cases. So far I have not yet sufficient data to state what, if any reduction of mortality has resulted, but as it was in the spring the measure was adopted and only 3 deaths have been recorded since, a fair inference of its utility may be assumed.

I am pleased to report a considerable reduction in the mortality from Zymotic Enteritis—23 this year, against 71 in 1904.

This disease has always been the bane of our infant population, and I can but hope that our immunity this summer will not tempt parents to neglect their duties in the matter of cleanliness in and watchfulness over the infant dietary. The Council may well congratulate themselves on such a successful consummation of their enthusiastic efforts towards reform in this matter, and I can say no effort will be spared on the part of your officials and the Medical men of the district to minimise this great blot in the history of our infant population.

Infant Mortality over the country, though not increasing to any alarming extent, yet shows an unfavourable ratio with a decreasing birth rate, and it is worthy of every effort on the part of our district authority to conserve this most considerable asset in a working community—the coming source of labour, our infant lives.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The number of cases of Infectious Disease notified during the year is in excess of 1904, namely:—168, as compared with 89 in 1904, but considerably less than in 1903, when we had 213 cases.

Scarlet Fever, Diphtheria, and Enteric Fever, all show an increase from last year, though not to any alarming extent; and in proportion to the population the return is certainly very favourable, only 9·1 per thousand.

The following tables show the distribution in the Wards of the notified cases, also the ages of those attacked.

CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES NOTIFIED DURING 12 MONTHS
ENDING DEC. 31ST, 1905. ASHINGTON URBAN DISTRICT.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASE.	Cases Notified in whole district at Ages :—Years.							Total Cases in each Locality.		Cases removed to Hospital.	
	At all Ages.	Und. 1 yr.	1 and und. 5	5 and und. 15	15 and und. 25	25 and und. 65	65 and upds.	Ash- ington	Hirst.	Ash- ington	Hirst.
Smallpox	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cholera	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Diphtheria	27	1	6	17	3	0	0	7	20	0	0
Membr. Croup	18	0	0	2	4	11	1	7	11	0	0
Erysipilas	69	1	34	33	1	0	0	14	55	0	0
Scarlet Fever	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Typhus Fever	48	0	5	20	7	16	0	26	22	25	15
Enteric Fever	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Relapsing Fever	4	0	0	2	2	0	0	3	1	0	0
Continued Fever	2	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	0	0	0
Puerperal Fever	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Plague	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	168	2	45	74	18	28	1	59	109	25	15

ASHINGTON U. D. COUNCIL. DISTRIBUTION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Month.	Continued Fever.		Diphtheria and M. Croup.		Erysipelas.		Scarlet Fever.		Typh'd Fever.		Puerperal Fever.		Total.		
	Ash- ington	Hirst	Ash- ington	Hirst	Ash- ington	Hirst	Ash- ington	Hirst	Ash- ington	Hirst	Ash- ington	Hirst	Ash- ington	Hirst	Both
Jan ..	0	1	0	3	0	1	0	4	8	8	1	0	9	17	26
Feb ..	1	0	1	5	0	2	0	4	2	3	0	0	4	14	18
Mar ..	0	0	3	4	1	1	0	6	3	3	1	0	8	14	22
April ..	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	2	0	1	0	0	2	5	7
May ..	0	0	1	0	0	2	1	10	5	0	0	0	7	12	19
June ..	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	2	0	0	0	3	3	6
July ..	0	0	1	2	0	0	2	4	1	0	0	0	4	6	10
Aug ..	0	0	0	1	2	1	3	9	4	5	0	0	9	16	25
Sept ..	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	3	3	6
Oct ..	1	0	0	0	1	1	2	4	0	1	0	0	4	6	10
Nov ..	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	2	3	5
Dec ..	0	0	0	3	1	0	3	7	0	0	0	0	4	10	14
Total	3	1	7	20	7	11	14	55	26	22	2	0	59	109	168

During December 1903, and the beginning of 1904, an extensive outbreak of Measles occurred in both Wards. This necessitated the closing of the schools all over the district, followed by the voluntary closing of Sunday Schools and other meetings amongst children for the period of 4 or 5 weeks, with good results in stamping out the epidemic. Though the outbreak was very extensive, very few fatal cases occurred, only 4 being registered in 1904, and none this year.

During 1905 there has been no other disease exhibiting epidemic features.

As regards the increase of Typhoid this year, your Sanitary Inspector and myself tried to trace the origin of the cases, but without result. A few cases were notified in localities where, on examination of the drainage system, improvements were found necessary, which improvements were at once effected. Over the district, the number of cases, their street distribution, and the differing circumstances in each case, preclude any possibility of infection being due to one medium. There has been no outbreak to afford any data of enquiry, and in a district such as ours, even in spite of the most perfect precautions, complete exemption is hardly to be expected. Every effort is made however, on the discovery of cases to prevent any possibility of spread and to obtain the complete isolation of those attacked.

HOSPITAL.

During the year 42 cases of Enteric Fever were admitted to Hospital. Of these 25 were from Ashington, 15 from Hirst, and 2 from Blyth.

The death rate in Hospital is about 14 per cent. but certain facts must be considered as modifying and correcting this rate as an index of the cases and their treatment.

3 cases were admitted to Hospital while in extremis, 1 dying a few hours after admission, and the other 2 in twenty-four hours. Such admissions do not afford data for the comparative value of Hospital treatment.

The other fatal cases were, one from Blyth who died on the fifth day after admission, and who contracted the disease on his ship; one from Ashington who died on the sixth day after admission; and one from Hirst who died on the sixteenth day after admission. These were the only deaths in cases who had undergone treatment, and we may safely reduce the Hospital death rate from the point of view of treatment to 7 per cent.

A permanent Nurse has been engaged, resident at Hospital.

Several improvements have been made in the way of Hospital facilities, and the installation of the Electric light, which is almost completed will be a great advantage, and very much safer than the system of oil lamps which at present obtains. A good deal might be done in improving the culinary accommodation which is very limited and quite inadequate, when a number of patients are in residence. There is ample space for building and the extension might be effected without any great inconvenience, while the Hospital is empty.

EXTENSION AND IMPROVEMENTS.

The new houses erected have all been in accordance with Bye-laws and conform to plans previously submitted to Council. Several of the new houses at Hirst have wash houses attached which is a very desirable improvement.

Street improvements are being carried on in Park Road, Wansbeck Terrace, etc., to the extent almost of road-making in some places.

Several good streets have been made in Hirst, and the widening and continuing of thoroughfares has afforded considerable convenience to heavier traffic.

The widening of footpaths is a matter of congratulation, and it is to be hoped that even greater uniformity will be attained.

Several new Electric Lamps have been erected to meet the growing needs of our district.

SEWAGE, SCAVENGING, AND DISINFECTING.

Three Sewers have had flushing apparatus attached that previously had none, and I have to report the better working of all existing sewers and their increasing adequacy.

Scavenging is being conducted in a manner that affords no complaint.

The difficulties of our district in this respect are enormous, yet every success has attended our efforts towards efficiency in this department. The prevailing system of ashpits with privies attached in such proximity to the houses is not ideal, but the strict regulation of cleansing minimises the danger to a great extent. This year spraying of ashpits with lime frequently has been carried out with success, and with the help of the new spraying pumps, we can carry through the work with greater economy and efficiency. The entire district can be thoroughly done four times at a little over the cost of one spraying in previous years, and done much more quickly and effectively.

An extra Water Cart and a Mud Cart for street cleansing purposes have been procured.

WATER.

I am glad to report a better water supply than last year, not better as regards quantity or purity, but in distribution.

To meet the building extensions in Hirst, a number of new taps were provided in order to make the supply more convenient and more readily accessible to householders.

The additional distribution was found to make the existing pressure inadequate for a constant supply, and to remedy this, three new pressure tanks have been erected with a most successful result.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

In accordance with the Factories and Workshops Act, 1901, I beg to report the number of Factories and Workshops in the district to be the same as last year, viz.:—5 Factories and 12 Workshops. A few improvements in some of these in the matter of cleanliness and better ventilation have been recommended and carried out. They are all above ground. The Sanitary accommodation for both sexes has been made efficient.

Thanking you for your consideration and courtesy during the past year.

I remain, Gentlemen,

Your Obedient Servant,

R. J. MILLS, M.O.H.

